
Observations and Reflections From Sojourners

Stephen Janasie, a member of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Watershed Ambassadors Program, spent six days on the sojourn. He left with these observations, excerpted from the Summer 2002 edition of the Delaware River Greenway Partnership NEWS:

On our very first morning, we were greeted at the put-in by a bald eagle who was relaxing in a tree upon the opposite river bank. I took this as an omen of good things to come.

I am a man who spent most of his life moving between the immediate metropolitan area of New York City and the coastline of the Jersey Shore. Canoeing down a swift-moving freeway of water in between the mountains of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey was a totally foreign experience to me. My eyes were constantly bombarded by waves of greens, browns, grays, whites, and blues. Occasionally, a trout would break the surface somewhere near the boat, and the birds were omnipresent.

Interestingly, I often learned as much in my canoe as I did on the shore. Conversing with my fellow Sojourners was a true joy, and there was no shortage of interesting people on the trip. Perhaps the best moment of my journey occurred as I was passing through the Delaware Water Gap. I had the "Indian Head" rock formation pointed out to me by a member of our brethren, who then followed up the sight with stories of both his and his forefathers' adventures around that very piece of the earth. Such experiences were like a daily ritual out on the river, and I began to feel very much at home.

The Delaware River Sojourn was planned meticulously, and so everyone seemed to know where to be and when to be there, thus allowing each day to flow seamlessly into the next.

I have been told that we are at a crossroads in our relationship with the environment; that the decisions that we make today will have a dramatic impact on both the immediate and distant future. Educational experiences like the Delaware River Sojourn leave me hopeful that some citizens already understand how invaluable our natural resources are to both ourselves and future generations.

In the end, the Sojourn would take its place amongst some of the fondest memories of my young life.

